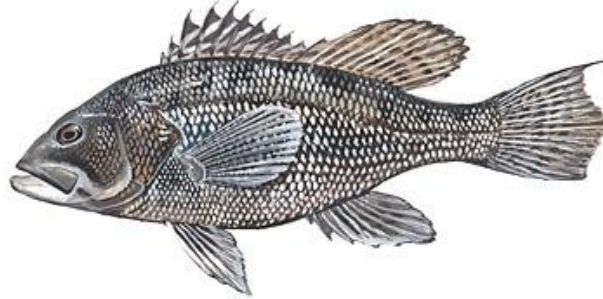


**Frequently Asked Questions for Black Sea Bass Pot Endorsement**  
**Transferability Regulations**  
**August 2012**



Black Sea bass (*Centropristis striata*)

**What is the purpose of the Resubmitted Amendment 18A Action Amendment?**

- Amendment 18A to the Fishery Management Plan for the Snapper-Grouper Fishery of the South Atlantic Region (Amendment 18A) was implemented on July 1, 2012, and established a black sea bass pot endorsement program.
- Amendment 18A also contained an action to allow black sea bass pot endorsements to be transferred to individuals or entities that hold or simultaneously obtain a South Atlantic Unlimited Snapper-Grouper Permit.
- The version of Amendment 18A that was submitted for Secretarial approval had the wrong preferred alternative designated and there were discrepancies in the record regarding the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council's discussion of the alternatives. Because of these issues NOAA Fisheries did not approve the action to allow black sea bass pot endorsements to be transferred.
- The black sea bass pot endorsement transferability action is addressed in a separate amendment (Resubmitted Amendment 18A Action Amendment).

**Who received a black sea bass pot endorsement when Amendment 18A was implemented?**

- To qualify for an endorsement, **all** the following conditions had to be met:
  - Own a valid or renewable Unlimited South Atlantic Snapper-Grouper Permit as of the effective date of the final rule implementing Amendment 18A;
  - Average black sea bass landings using pot gear of at least 2,500 pounds whole weight between January 1, 1999, and December 31, 2010; and
  - At least one pound of reported black sea bass commercial landings between January 1, 2008, and December 31, 2010.

**If the Resubmitted Amendment 18A Action Amendment is approved, under what conditions could black sea bass pot endorsements be transferred?**

- Valid or renewable black sea bass pot endorsements would be transferable upon the effective date of the final rule implementing this action.
- Valid and renewable endorsements could only be transferred to any individual or entity holding or simultaneously obtaining a valid South Atlantic Unlimited Snapper-Grouper Permit.

- Valid and renewable endorsements would be transferable, independently from the South Atlantic Unlimited Snapper Grouper Permit.
- All landings of black sea bass using the black sea bass pot endorsement would be associated with the South Atlantic Unlimited Snapper-Grouper Permit with which the endorsement is associated regardless of whether landings occurred before or after the black sea bass pot endorsement was issued.
- Landings of black sea bass using the black sea bass pot endorsement would not be transferred with the endorsement.
- Endorsements would not be automatically renewed when the associated South Atlantic Unlimited Snapper-Grouper Permit is renewed. (Endorsement holders would need to check a box on the application to renew their black sea bass pot endorsement.)

**What does black sea bass pot endorsement allow endorsement holders to do?**

- With the endorsement, a fisherman is legally allowed to deploy black sea bass pot gear in the South Atlantic for the purposes of harvesting black sea bass.

**Is there an appeals process for those who feel they should be issued an endorsement but did not receive one?**

- Yes. The appeals process stipulates a 90-day time limit to submit an appeals application beginning from the effective date of the final rule July 1, 2012.
- Appeals must be submitted to the Regional Administrator postmarked no later than October 1, 2012, and must contain documentation supporting the basis for the appeal.
- The outcome of appeals is based solely on logbooks and/or state landings records.
- No hardship arguments will be considered.

**Where can I find more information about the new regulations for black sea bass and data collection for the recreational sector of the snapper-grouper fishery?**

- Contact NOAA Fisheries Southeast Regional Office  
*By Mail:* Southeast Regional Office, c/o Kate Michie  
 263 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue South  
 St. Petersburg, Florida 33701-5505  
*By FAX:* (727) 824-5308  
*By Phone:* (727) 824-5305
- The Resubmitted Amendment 18A Action Amendment is available on line at: NOAA Fisheries Southeast Regional Office Web site:  
<http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sf/SASnapperGrouperHomepage.htm>  
 or, the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council Web site:  
<http://www.safmc.net/Library/SnapperGrouper/tabid/415/Default.aspx>